A guide to bicycling in Columbia

Bicycles don't pollute. Bicycles give you good exercise to ward off all sorts of things. Bicycles don't get caught in traffic jams. They're easy to park. They don't use much gas. They don't coast a whole lot. They're pretty. They're entertainment for the whole family. You can take them anywhere since a 10 speed will let you negotiate, almost any hill. And, besides, everybody who is anybody that has their head in any sort of right place has got one, if you see what I mean.

But dear friends, before you run out and buy a bike, take a moment to consider a few points. If all of your riding is to be in town, you may be better off with something other than a 10-speed. All those gears and the necessity of having the bike in motion to change them may turn out to be a liability in stop-and-go traffic; it's like driving a high strung sports car back and forth to work when a '61 Volkswagen will do. A good 3-speed will get you where you want to go with a minimum of trouble and a savings moneywise. With a little added effort and minimum of expense, a one-speed is better than none.

Also, every bicycle is not a good one. A little knowledge of basics and a lot of thought should go into the question of whether or not to buy a bike and which one to buy.

There are all sorts of brand names in all sorts of sizes and colors, so before you buy, shop around and test ride bikes with the equipment to fit your needs. But even with the abundance of brands there are a number of things to look for that will give you an indication of the quality of a bike. Most of these apply to 10 speeds only, but a good many would obviously be true of bikes in general.

The first and most important thing to look for is the bike's frame, which is often a good indicator of the overall quality. Most experts recommend Reynolds 531 tubing. It is produced in England from a special steel alloy that combines strength and lightness to produce a bike that accelerates easily and handles with a quick and lively responsiveness.

Reynolds tubing comes in two types, straight-gauged and butted. Butted tubing is better and more expensive because the walls thicken at the ends to provide strength and are thin in the middle to reduce weight. A sticker on the seat tube will tell you whether the tubing is Reynolds.

If you can't afford Reynolds tubing, insist on seamless steel-molydenum alloy. Lugged joints--that is, joints that are welded at low temperature and reinforced with a collar or sleeve--are another sign of quality. A good frame will flex slightly when you put weight on a pedal and will provide safe and comfortable riding over most types of terrain and road conditions.

Next, check the gears, if there are any. Most 10- and 5-speeds will have wide-ratio gearing that gives you low gears to conquer hills and high gears that take you about as fast you want to go. On 10-speeds the gear ratios are a little different with almost every bike, but you can check them by simply counting the teeth on the gear sprockets. The range for wide-ratio rear cogs is usually 14, 17, 20, 24 and 28 teeth per sprocket. The crank gear wheels up front usually have around 40 and 50 teeth.

Most shifters or derailleurs will do the job of jumping your chain from one sprocket to the next, but some are smoother, quieter and more trouble free than others. Names to look for include Campagnola Record, Simplex Prestige, Huret Allvit and Shimano Skylark.

The best bikes are likely to have centerpull brakes made from an aluminum alloy with quick-release hand levers that stop you quickly and quietly. Lesser quality bikes will have side-pull brakes and will be made from steel alloy which contributes weight and reduces efficiency. Names to look for include Wienmann and Mafac.

The best hubs are made from aluminum alloy and are machined from a single piece of metal. Good bikes will have quick-releases hubs that facilitate tire repair and wheel adjustment. Other bikes will have less convenient wing nuts or non-convenient plain nuts that you have been fumbling with for years. Good hub acmanufacturers include Campagnola, Cinelli, Normandy and Simplex.

The lightest and most dependable rims are made from aluminum alloy and have brand names like Wienmenn, Mavic and Fiamme. Steel rims are heavier and cheaper.

Tires will be either tubular or clincher types. Tubular tires are prone to flats and are used mostly on competition bikes where lightness and ease of changing are highly important. Clinchers are more common. They are "U" shaped and have tubes that are fairly easily patched.

Pedals and cranks should be all-metal (rattrap) and made of aluminum or steel. Toe clips and straps provide the advantage of the rider's being able to apply power through 360 degrees of the pedal movement, a technique known as "ankling". Toe clips and straps can be clumsy and make mounting and dismounting difficult, a definite liability in stop-and-go situations.

The entire bike should weigh around 30 pounds or as little as 22 pounds in the case of a really fine lightweight racer, and a few test-rides should convince you of the advantage of quality components and careful construction.

To determine the correct frame size for you, simple straddle the bar anc check for a maximum of one of two inches clearance. The seat should adjust to a high enough position so that you are able to lock your knees when your heel is on the pedal. this gives you the maximum efficiency while pedaling. The frame also should be long enough to provide a comfortable, balanced position while you are riding.

Now don't get me wrong, the name isn't everything. Most companies have some poor quality products thrown in with the best equipment. And speaking of money, the most expensive bike or component isn't always the best. The only thing to do is rely on the dealer's honesty and other people's opinions and a little judgement on your part, and since a bike's performance while you are riding it is the only thing that's really important, don't possibly consider buying a bike without a long testride.

For those of you who don't have the money to purchase a new 10-speed which will run from $100 to as much as $500, there are other means. A potentially good source is the annual auction of unclaimed stolen bikes that the Columbia Police Department holds each December. Other than that, check the want ads, bulletin boards around the University or spread the word that you want to buy a bike.

While 3-speeds and the old standby 1-speeds are heavier and take more effort to ride than 5- or 10-speeds, they are still good means of cheap transportation. You can buy them new or used, or with a little ingenuity, you can assemble a good bike from parts. All that's required is two or three bikes with something missing, bent or broken. By combining parts you come up with a practical if not esthetically pleasing bike.

After you get a bike, buy a lock. People have a wonderful habit of borrowing an unlocked bike either temporarily or permanently, and bikes are easily disguised and hard to recover. Get a good strong chain and lock the bike to something immovable. Lock it through the frame or the crank but not through the spokes.

If you plan to ride at night, be sure to get a light and reflectors. They will keep you out of hassles with the police. More importantly, they will keep you out of holes that can severely damage a wheel and a rider. Battery powered lights are fairly inexpensive, but a generator is dependable and doesn't require frequent replacement.

You will need some equipment for routine maintainence and repairs unless you want to run back to the dealer every week or two. A good crescent wrench will serve most occasions. A set of dogbone wrenches can come in handy, too, but be sure you get either metric or English sets depending on your bike. Don't come near a bike with a pair of pliers unless you want to ruin every nut on it.

If you have an extra two or three bucks around, get a tire pressure gauge, or even better, get a pump for a few dollars more. The right pressure is very important for both easy riding and tire life, and filling station air pumps and gauges are too unreliable to risk blowing up a tire or damaging a rim. Air pressure will gradually go down on any bike, especially with high pressure tires, so periodic checks are necessary.

Depending on what type of bike you buy, there may or may not be warranties and guarantees that you can get from a licensed dealer, and before you buy any bike make sure you can get dependable and intelligent service. If you are able, check the workshop and see if it looks like the mechanics know what they're doing. If there is a good workshop with adequate equipment and replacement parts, they can probably fix your bike and assemble it correctly in the first place.

A definitive guide to bikes which is often recommended to anybody really interested in them is **"The Complete Book of Bicycling"** by Eugene Sloan. It's available at bookstores and the libraries, and tells you just about anything you want to know.

Before you start riding around the town, please be advised that the City of Columbia requires that you have a license for your vehicle. The license costs 50c and you need to know your serial number, make, model, color, etc. The police station at 1415 Lincoln St. is the place to get a license.

As far as laws concerning the operation of a bicycle, the often ignored or unknown fact is that bicycle riders are granted all rights that operators of any vehicle are, and likewise, they are subject to all regulations and laws concerning traffic on the streets. Bicyclers are required to ride as near to the right-hand side of the road as practical and to ride no more than two abreast. It is illegal to carry more persons than the bicycle was built for, so unless you have a "bicycle built for two" double-heading is strictly not allowed.

Every bicycle must be equiped with a bell or some other device capable of producing a sound that can be heard at least 100 feet away, and every bike must have brakes capable of making the brake wheel skid on dry pavement.

If you aren't satisfied with just riding around town, an organization known as the Carolina Cyclers may be able to help. According to Dana Sawyer of the State Department of Parks, Recreation, the organization provides an opportunity for the "serious tourist and racing cyclist" to test his skills and enjoy the company of other people with similar interests. The Cyclers periodically sponsor tours through different areas of the state with the next one scheduled for later in the summer. For information concerning the touring aspect, the person to contact in Columbia is Dr. John T. Williams Jr., 3123 Makeway Dr., 256-1715.

The Cyclers also sponsor two 5-mile time trials and races, but these are not usually held in Columbia. There will be a state championship road race of 100 to 120 miles held on July 8 and persons interested in the race in particular or racing in general should contact Ray Guest, 1994 Forrest Dr., Sumter, S.C. The president of the club is Warner DeHart, 204 Gardner Dr., Hartsville, S.C..

Sawyer also stated that a bike trail across the state will open possibly in the fall. The trail will use secondary roads with light traffic and will cross the state from Baker Creek State Park near McCormick to Myrtle Beach State Park. Along the way it will pass through six state parks and one national forest campground. Persons interested in more information concerning the trail or interested in helping should write the State Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Box 1358, Columbia, S.C.

For more immediate touring pleasure, you can contact Joe Azar owner of the Cyclist bike shop at 911 Sumter St., who is organizing informal tours every weekend or so.

A good national organization to get in touch with is the League of American Wheelmen, which prints newsletter which contains a listing of races and tours around the country and other informative things on bicycling. The address for the national headquarters is Box 3928, Torrence, California, 90510.

So buying a bicycle is not always as easy as it might first seem.

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Upcoming events in the Columbia area

Concerts

BLACK SABBATH will perform at Municipal Auditorium in Atlanta June 19 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $3.50, $4.50, and $5.50. All seats reserved with late orders being picked up at the auditorium.

RARE EARTH will be in Atlanta Municipal Auditorium at 8 p.m. on July 18. Ticket information incomplete.

URIAH HEAP with special guest star Long John Baldry will be in Atlanta July 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the Sports Arena. Tickets are $4.50 in advance and $5.50 at the door. Make checks payable to Howard Stein Enterprises Inc., P. O. Box 7930, Atlanta, Ga. 30303.

ATLANTA JAZZ FESTIVAL is scheduled for Braves' Stadium on Friday and Saturday, June 30 and 31.

THE LIZA MINNELLI SHOW will feature America's hottest new superstar in a presentation of vitality and talent. The show is set for June 28 at 7 and 10 p.m. in Charleston Municipal Auditorium.

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND will appear in open concert with Spirit, Alex Taylor, Crisis, and Goose Creek Symphony at Charlotte's Memorial Stadium. Concert begins at 7 p.m. with tickets set at $5 in advance and $6 at the door.

JERRY LEE LEWIS and company will perform the "Killer's" own brand of fast music at a Country Music Spectacular in Charlotte Coliseum on Saturday, June 24 at 8 p.m. Tickets are on sale for $4 and $5.50.

THE ROLLING STONES with Stevie Wonder and Martha Reeves will appear in concert on July 6 at Charlotte Coliseum. Tickets are now on sale for $6.50. Order soon to avoid missing England's hottest and tightest rock-and-roll band.

EDGAR WINTER will perform June 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Sports Arena in Atlanta. Tickets are $4.50 in advance and $5.50 at the door. All seats reserved. Mail orders enclose self-addressed envelope with certified check or money order payable to "Howard Stein Enterprises, Inc.", P. O. Box 7930, Atlanta, 30309. Specify show and ticket desired. Orders received three days before the show will be held at box office.

PROCOL HARRUM will perform July 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Sports Arena in Atlanta. Tickets are $4.50 in advance and they'll be a dollar more at the door. Mail order info same as Winter concert above.

B. J. THOMAS will perform at Atlanta Municipal Auditorium along with Parrish and Gurvitz, a new British group. Tickets are on sale for $4, $5 and $6. The gig is on June 13 at 8 p.m.

ATLANTA JAZZ FESTIVAL is scheduled for Braves Stadium on Friday and Saturday, June 30 and 31. Recommended.

Specials

ARCHERY TOURNAMENT -- The National Field Archery Association's 1972 Southeastern Tournament will be held at Clemson on June 17-18. Over 400 professionals and amateurs are set to attend the event which is being hosted by Keowee-Bowmen.

OKLAHOMA will open for a 36-performance run as the summer show for the University of South Carolina Theater at Myrtle Beach. Opening night is scheduled for June 26.

SANDLAPPER GALLERY is hosting a one-artist exhibition at its West Columbia studio. The show, featuring the works of Judith Melberg, will run through June 16. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

STUMP MEETINGS will bring the Democratic candidates for the June 27 primary before the voters. Candidates will address voters at the following meetings: In Spartanburg on June 15, Charleston on June 19, Florence on June 23, and Columbia on June 26.

A BIRTHDAY PARTY will be held in honor of Arthur Middleton at Middleton Place Gardens and Plantation Stables on June 25.

MS. CORETTA KING will speak at Greenville Auditorium at 4 p.m. June 18. Proceeds will go to the King Center for Social Change in Atlanta.

Cinema

FRITZ THE CAT, an X-rated cartoon based very loosely on the works of artist R. Crum, begins June 9 at Atlantic Twin II787-1225.

BUCK AND THE PREACHER, starring Sidney Poitier, Harry Belafonte, and Ruby Dee will open June 14 at Atlantic Twin I, 787-1225. The film, directed by Poitier, is a Western.

THE BISCUIT EATERS, a Walt Disney feature starring Godfrey Cambridge and Johnny Whitaker, begins June 16 at Plaza III, 254-7960. Parents Magazine says the film contains "some disturbing racial stereotypes." Parents be warned.

PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM stars Woody Allen in the film version of his hit Broadway play about a man controlled by the spirit of actor Humphrey Bogart. Carolina, 252-8011. Recommended.

CABARET, starring Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey, will open the new Gamecock Theatre. See Osceola review.

TO FIND A MAN is an adolescent comedy about a young girl who needs an abortion and a young boy who needs a girl. Lloyd Bridges, Tom Ewell, and Phyllis Newman head the cast. Coming to the new Gamecock Theater.

WHAT'S UP, DOC? -- Peter Bogdanovich's screwball comedy of mistaken suitcases in San Francisco features Barbra Streisand and Ryan O'Neal. Coming June 23, Palmetto Theatre, 254-5800.

LATE SHOWS -- The Palmetto Theatre have the following films scheduled for Friday and Saturday night late shows during June: June 16-17, "No Blade of Grass", an ugly picture of what could happen if man were faced by an ecological holocaust. Content outweighs the technique with plenty of violence. June 23-24, Jane Fonda does her thing as "Barbarella," the hippest chick in the galaxy. Really this is quite a pleasant fantasy. With David Hemmings and John Philip Law. June 30-July 1, "The Strawberry Statement" with Bruce Davison and Kim Darby in a film about student revolt and pig retaliation. Good music.

BEN -- Willard's rat friends are back. This time with Ben as the leader of the pack. Begins June 9, Miracle Theater, 256-1950.

Classifieds

FOR SALE: Yep, still got that alto sax for sale from last time. Great for beginner students. Will sell for $50. Like new. Call 253-7816 anytime day or no night.

FOR SALE: Nikon Super Zoom 8 movie camera with three film speeds fade-out, remote control equipment, motorized 8.8 mm to 45 mm zoom, movie lite, etc. $100.00. Call 252-8385. Keep trying.

FOR SALE: Over 30 head, splitting the sports car scene for the organic life is selling his low mileage, cream puff, 1970 Karman Ghia in mint condition. Help me make the transition. Call 256-1747 or 782-0937. Anytime.

FOR SALE -- 1965 VW Bus, rebuilt engine and transmission, new tires, & sun roof. "Very Sporty". Call Charlie, 253-0206, after 6.

Available for part-time office work. Enrolled at USC for one course through summer. Prefer work related to legal professions. Secretarial and research skills. Phone 254-1863.

Will pay highest price for South Carolina tokens including mill, bus, store, medals and etc. Write or send for my appraisal. Randy Chambers, box 326, Seneca, S. C., 29678.

WANTED: People needed to help run a daycare center. Tues., Thursday 9-12. Volunteer some happiness or do it for University credit. Contact Shelley McGeorge, 1107 Maple St., Columbia.

Looking for female swingers in Fat City area. Let's have an orgy. Write Drawer F, Box 5053, Columbia, S. C. 29250.

WANTED: Old Kinks albums: Kinks - Size, Face to Face, Kinkdom and The Kink Kontroversy. Also there may be others that I don't know titles for. Will buy or trade. Please call Jane -- 254-2189. Before 1 p.m. or after 8. (Anytime on Sunday).

WANTED: One long-haired brunette with gorgeous brown eyes seen walking from the Carolina Bookstore down Green St. around 1:30 or 2:00 on June 1. When last seen she was wearing bell bottom blue jeans and an orange knit top with purple trim and that bare midriff look so popular at colleges and universities all over the nation. Anybody that knows her name and phone number please call 254-7086. And please hurry.

WANTED: High-paying employment for highly qualified young man with experienced firm offering quick advancement, full hospitalization benefits, two weeks paid vacation, profit-sharing plan, scholarship fund, plush office with wall-to-wall carpet, nice-looking secretary, no pressure and preferably, no work. Call 758-3261 between 12 and 5 on Saturdays. Interviews by appointment only.

WANTED: Used Astroblaster with auxillary power-pack for extra-vehicular operation. Must be fully adjustable and have Pinpoint-Piercer attachment, and combination Big-Bang Timer and Clutz-Proof Safety made. Used Federation equipment O. K. if accompanied by official release papers. Call Sector 569 Mars Substation 556-9980 and ask for Joe Blfstlpk.

FREE FREE FREE -- Three beautiful kittens -- mixed colors -- will soon be ready for a new home in the Fat City area. Call Tim or Mike, 253-8828, 253-4261 or 253-4262. Remember, they're free. And really cute.